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Arai et al.

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(54) **CONNECTOR FOR CABLE CONNECTION**

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H01R 13/52 (2006.01)

H01R 13/506 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **H01R 13/5205** (2013.01); **H01R 13/506** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC H01R 13/5208; H01R 13/5205; H01R 13/5221; H01R 13/521; H01R 13/5219

USPC 439/587, 584; 339/103

See application file for complete search history.

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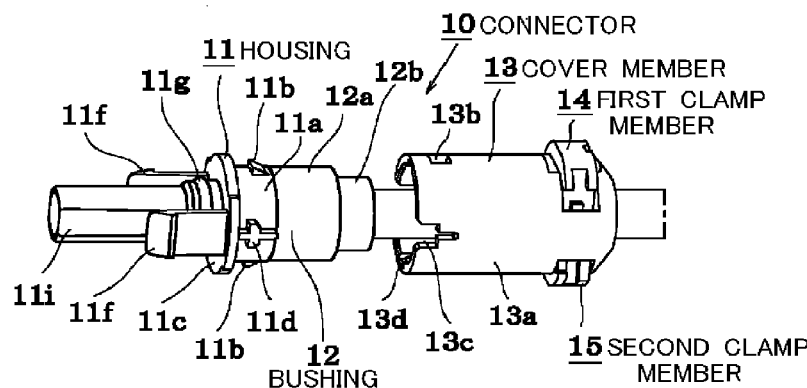
Primary Examiner — Abdullah Riyami

Assistant Examiner — Vladimir Imas

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A connector for cable connection having good connection workability is provided. A waterproof connector for cable connection includes a housing having a cylindrical portion for allowing a cable to which a terminal is connected to be attached thereto, a waterproof bushing, a cover member, and a clamp member. In a state that the cable is attached to the housing through the cylindrical portion, a front portion of the bushing is elastically attached to the outer periphery of the cylindrical portion, and a rear portion of the bushing is elastically attached to the outer periphery of the cable. The cover member has an attachment portion for the clamp member. The clamp member attached to the attachment portion clamps the cable.

1 Claim, 13 Drawing Sheets



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FIG. 1B

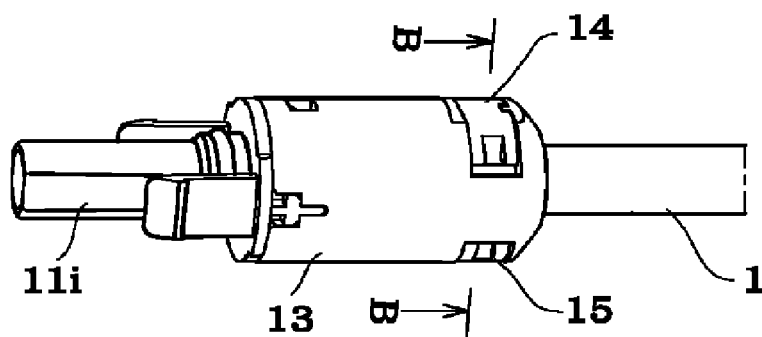


FIG. 1C

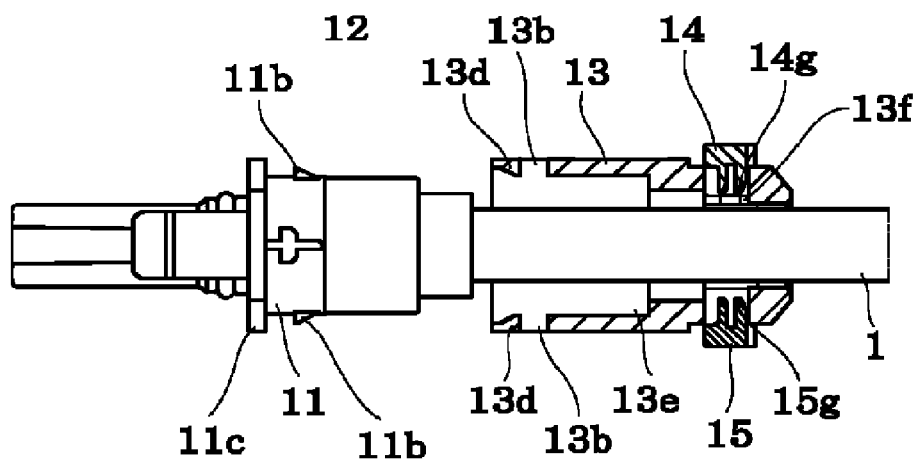


FIG. 2A

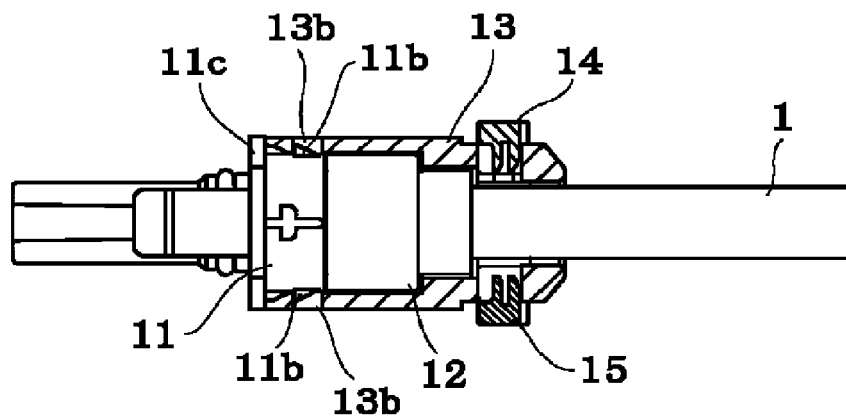


FIG. 2B

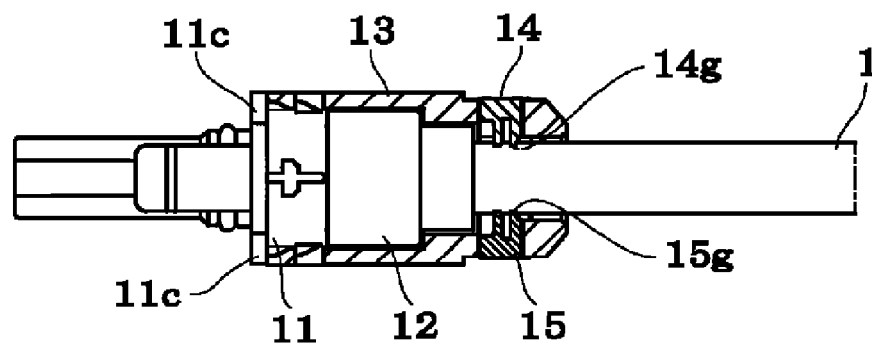


FIG. 2C

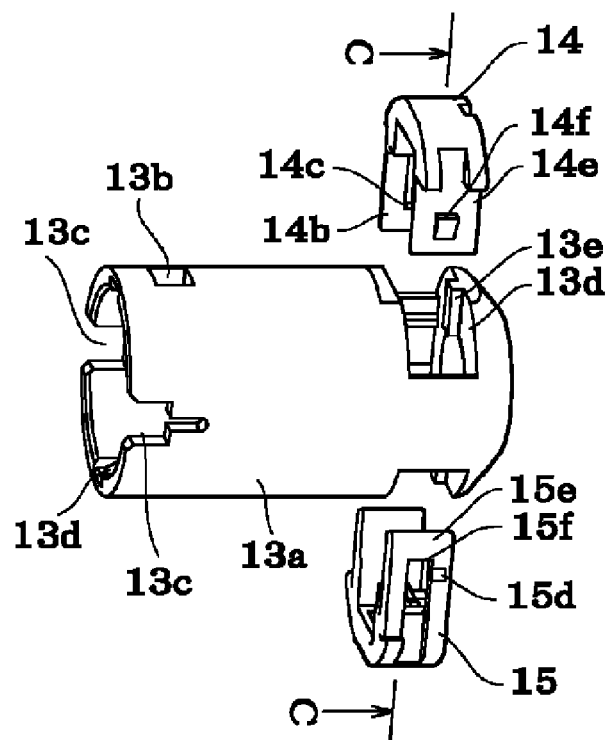
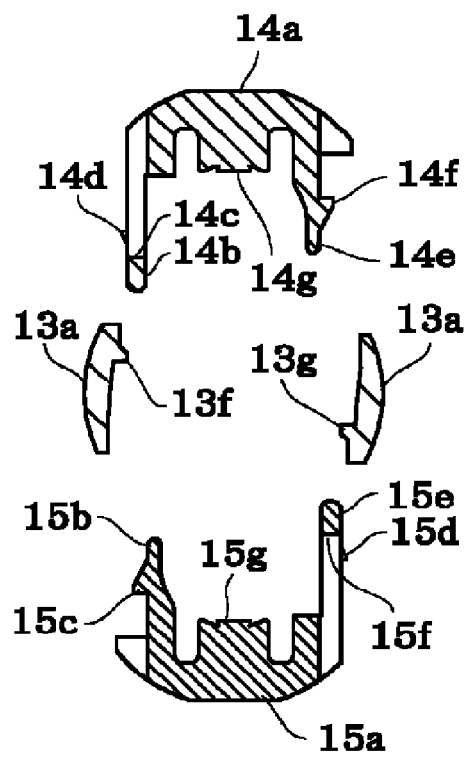


FIG. 3A

< C-C CROSS-SECTIONAL VIEW >

*FIG. 3B*

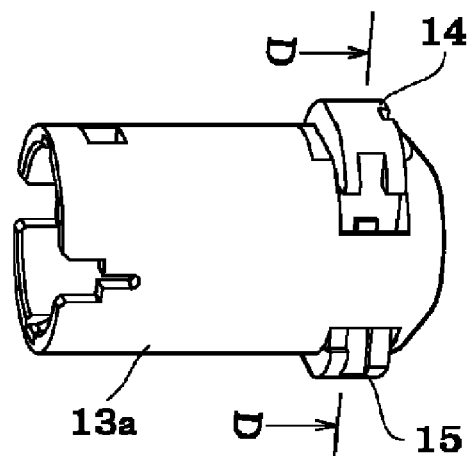


FIG. 3C

<D-D CROSS-SECTIONAL VIEW>

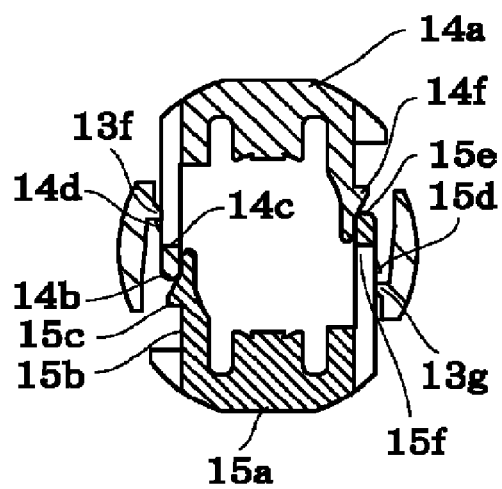


FIG. 3D

<A-A CROSS-SECTIONAL VIEW>

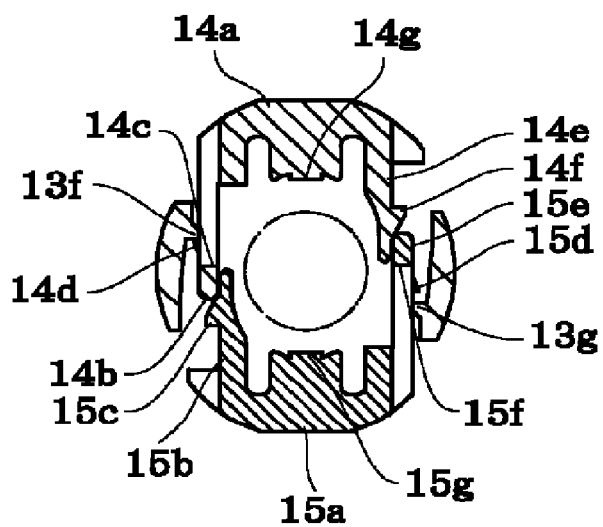


FIG. 4A

<B-B CROSS-SECTIONAL VIEW>

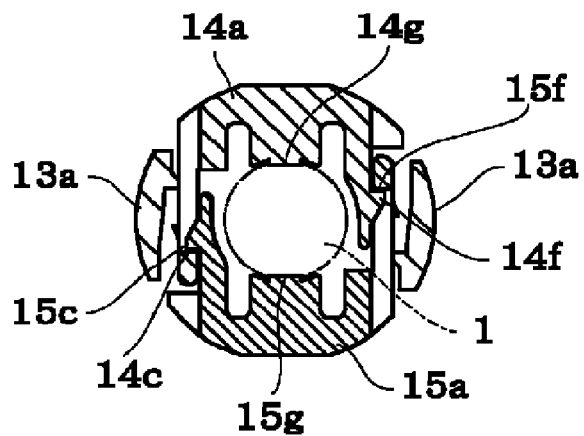


FIG. 4B

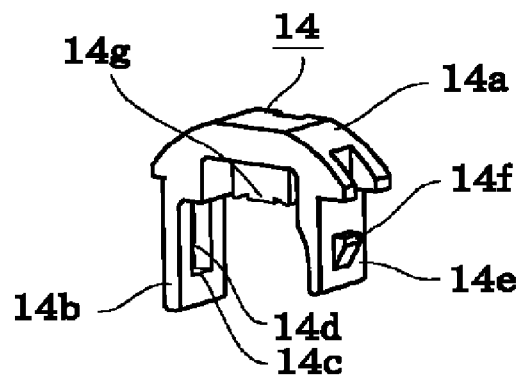


FIG. 5A

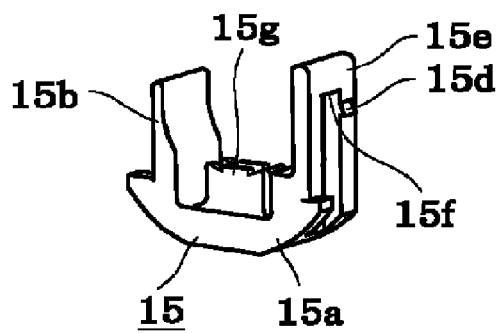


FIG. 5B

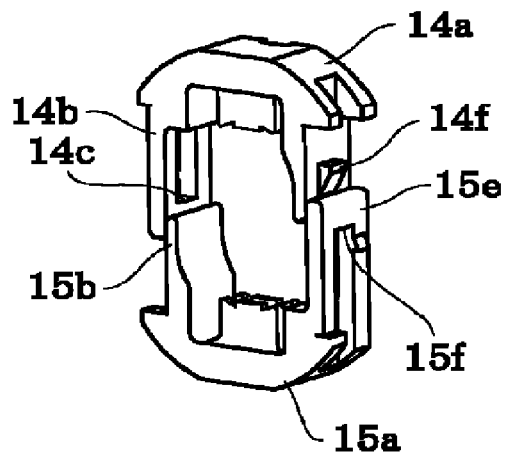


FIG. 5C

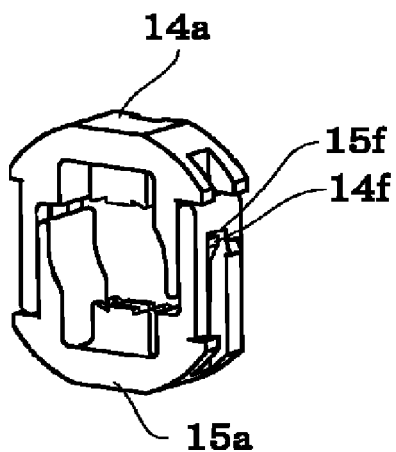


FIG. 5D

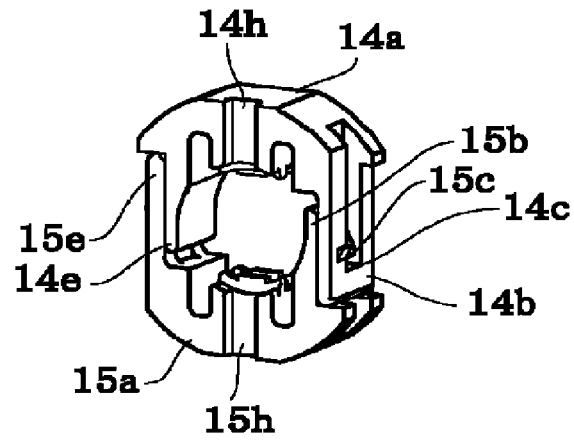


FIG. 5E

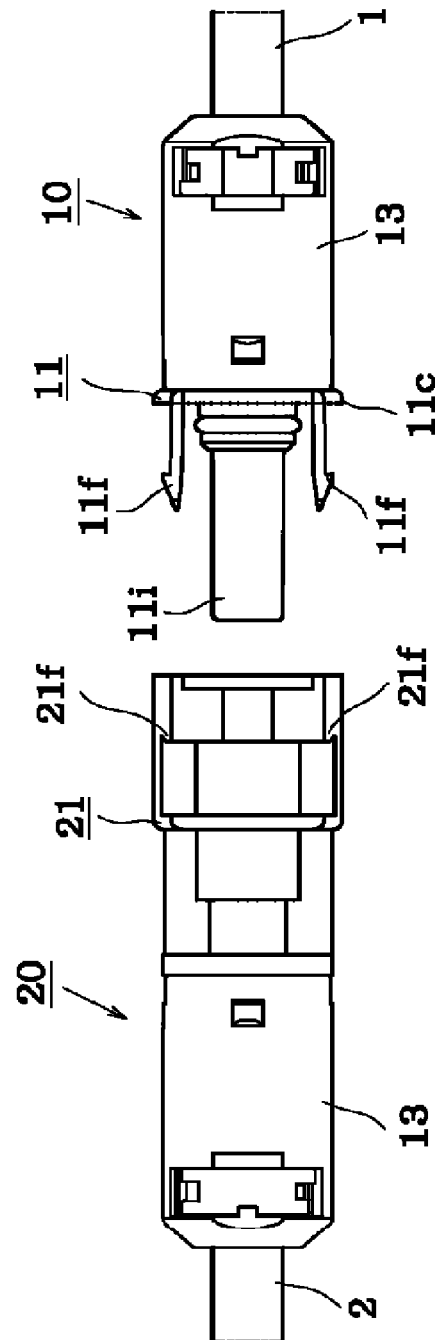


FIG. 6A

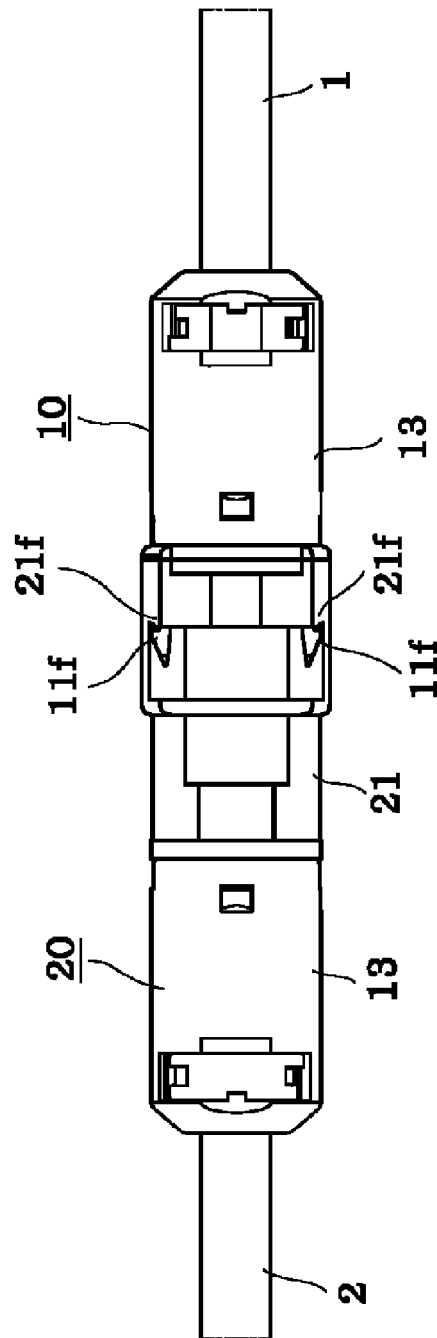


FIG. 6B

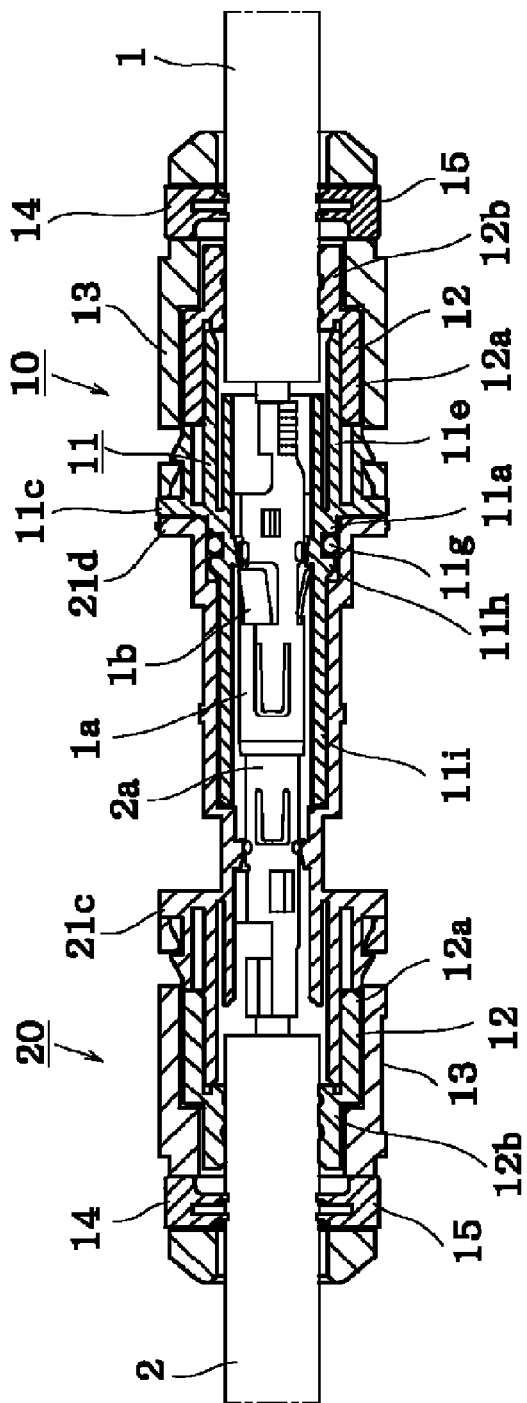


FIG. 7

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CONNECTOR FOR CABLE CONNECTION**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION**

The contents of the following Japanese patent application are incorporated herein by reference,
NO. 2014-216949 filed on Oct. 24, 2014.

FIELD

The present invention relates to a waterproof connector for cable connection.

BACKGROUND

Waterproof connectors for cable connection are used for connecting a plurality of solar panels in a field, for example.

Patent Literature 1 discloses as an example a cable clamp connection structure that connects cables by double nuts and/or a ratchet mechanism.

However, such a screw-in type cable clamp connection structure requires long man-hours for a clamping operation, resulting in poor workability.

CITATION LIST**Patent Literature**

Patent Literature 1: Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 2011-18463

SUMMARY**Technical Problem**

An object of the present invention is to provide a connector for cable connection having good connection workability.

Solution to Problem

A connector for cable connection according to one aspect of the present invention, being a waterproof connector for cable connection, includes a housing having a cylindrical portion for allowing a cable to which a terminal is connected to be attached thereto, a waterproof bushing, a cover member, and a clamp member. In a state that the cable is attached to the housing through the cylindrical portion, a front portion of the bushing is elastically attached to an outer periphery of the cylindrical portion, and a rear portion of the bushing is elastically attached to an outer periphery of the cable; the cover member has an attachment portion for the clamp member; and the clamp member attached to the attachment portion clamps the cable.

Here, the bushing ensures watertightness between the housing of the connector and the cable. However, since the inner periphery of the bushing elastically and tightly makes contact with the outer periphery of the cylindrical portion of the housing and the outer periphery of the cable, if a force acts in the direction of pulling out the cable, the cable might not be securely held in the housing.

Accordingly, one aspect of the present invention is characterized in that a clamp mechanism for clamping the cable is provided in the cover member.

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In one aspect of the present invention, the structure of the clamp mechanism is not limited as long as the clamp mechanism can clamp the cable such that the cable cannot be pulled out of the housing.

As a structure that is easy to attach to the cover member, for example, the clamp member may clamp the cable by fitting a first clamp member and a second clamp member to each other.

Here, the first clamp member and the second clamp member constitute a two-step fitting structure having a pre-fitting portion and a fitting portion. The first clamp member and the second clamp member are attached to the attachment portion of the cover member in a state of fitting the pre-fitting portion. After the cable is inserted into and attached to the housing, the first clamp member and the second clamp member are fitted to each other by the fitting portion to clamp the cable. This structure makes it possible to attach the clamp member to the cover member in a pre-fitted state. Therefore, it is possible to bring the connector in a field, in a state that the front portion of the bushing is elastically attached to the cylindrical portion of the housing of the connector and the cover member having the pre-fitted clamp member is attached to the outer periphery of the bushing.

In the field, the cable to which the terminal is connected at a core wire is inserted into and attached to the housing from behind the connector. Then, just pushing the first and second clamp members in each other so as to make the clamp member into the fitted state completes the clamp connection of the cable.

According to the connector for cable connection of one aspect of the present invention, the bushing made of an elastic material provides watertightness between the housing and the outer periphery of the cable, and the clamp member attached to the cover member clamps the cable. Thus, the connector according to one aspect of the present invention is superior to a conventional screw-in type connector in clamp connection workability in a field.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

FIG. 1A shows an example of structure of a connector for cable connection according to one embodiment of the present invention, showing a state before a cover member is attached to a bushing, for the sake of explaining an attachment structure of the cover member.

FIG. 1B shows an example of structure of a connector for cable connection according to one embodiment of the present invention, showing a state in which a cable is inserted into the connector from behind in a state of pre-fitting a first clamp member and a second clamp member to the cover member.

FIG. 1C shows an example of structure of a connector for cable connection according to one embodiment of the present invention, showing a state in which the first clamp member and the second clamp member are inserted into each other to clamp the cable.

FIG. 2A shows a longitudinal cross-sectional view of FIG. 1A.

FIG. 2B shows a longitudinal cross-sectional view of FIG. 1B.

FIG. 2C shows a longitudinal cross-sectional view of FIG. 1C.

FIG. 3A shows a state before attaching the first and second clamp members to the cover member.

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FIG. 3B shows a state before attaching the first and second clamp members to the cover member, showing cross-sectional view along line C-C in FIG. 3A.

FIG. 3C shows a state in which the first clamp member and the second clamp member are attached to the cover member in a pre-fitted state.

FIG. 3D shows a state in which the first clamp member and the second clamp member are attached to the cover member in a pre-fitted state, showing cross-sectional view along line D-D in FIG. 3C.

FIG. 4A is a cross-sectional view taken along line A-A in FIG. 1B.

FIG. 4B is a cross-sectional view taken along line B-B in FIG. 1C.

FIG. 5A shows the first clamp member.

FIG. 5B shows the second clamp member.

FIG. 5C shows positional interrelationship between the first clamp member and the second clamp member.

FIG. 5D shows a fitted state of the first clamp member and the second clamp member.

FIG. 5E is a perspective view viewed from an opposite side from FIG. 5D.

FIG. 6A shows an example applying a connector structure according to one embodiment of the present invention to a socket connector and a plug connector, showing a state before being fitted.

FIG. 6B shows an example applying a connector structure according to one embodiment of the present invention to a socket connector and a plug connector, showing a state after being fitted.

FIG. 7 shows a longitudinal cross-sectional view of FIG. 6B.

DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

FIG. 7 shows a socket connector 10 and a plug connector 20, which adopt a connector structure according to one embodiment of the present invention, connected to each other. FIGS. 1A to 2C show an example of the socket connector 10.

The connector structure according to one embodiment of the present invention will be hereinafter described with taking the socket connector (below simply called "connector") as an example.

In the connector 10, as shown in FIG. 7, a terminal 1a is crimped onto a tip core wire of a cable 1, and contained in a housing 11 made of a resin.

Upon inserting the terminal 1a into the housing 11 from behind, lances 1b provided in the terminal 1a are engaged with a stopper 11h provided inside the housing 11.

The housing 11 has a main body 11a, a cylindrical portion 11e on which a front portion 12a of a rubber bushing 12 is elastically attached, and a fitting portion 11i fitted into the corresponding plug connector 20.

As shown in FIG. 1A, the housing 11 has a flange 11c, stopper projections 11b engaged with stopper openings 13b provided in a cover member 13 described later, and positioning projections 11d.

The housing 11 has an O-ring 11g fitted onto a proximal end of the fitting portion 11i, which is fitted into the plug connector 20, to seal a gap between the fitting portion 11i and the plug connector 20. As shown in FIG. 6B, hooks 11f are engaged with a stopper 21f provided in a housing 21 of the plug connector 20, so as to couple the housing 11 to the housing 21 of the plug connector 20.

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Note that, a coupling structure between the connector 10 and the plug connector 20 is not limited thereto, and various types of structures are adoptable.

By inserting the cable 1 having the crimped terminal 1a into the bushing 12 from behind, a rear portion 12b of the bushing 12 elastically and tightly makes contact with the outer periphery of the cable 1. The front portion 12a of the bushing 12 is elastically attached to the cylindrical portion 11e of the housing 11.

FIG. 1A shows a state in which the cover member 13 is detached from the housing 11, for the sake of explanation. However, in fact, the cable 1 is inserted from behind into and connected to the housing 11 with the cover member 13 attached thereto, as shown in FIG. 1B.

The bushing 12 is elastically attached to the cylindrical portion 11e of the housing 11 and the outer periphery of the cable 1 thereacross, so as to seal a gap between the cable 1 and the housing 11.

As shown in FIGS. 2A to 2C, the cover member 13 is attached so as to cover the bushing 12. As shown in FIGS. 3A and 3B, the cover member 13 has at its rear side attachment openings 13d to which a first clamp member 14 and a second clamp member 15 are attached.

FIGS. 5A to 5E are perspective views of the first and second clamp members 14 and 15. FIGS. 3B, 3D, 4A and 4B are cross-sectional views of the first and second clamp members 14 and 15.

The first and second clamp members 14 and 15 have fitting portions that are fitted to each other. The first clamp member 14 and the second clamp member 15 constitute a two-step fitting structure having a pre-fitted state in which the first clamp member 14 and the second clamp member 15 are attached to the cover member 13 with the tops thereof protruding from the attachment openings 13d of the cover member 13 as shown in FIGS. 3C and 3D, and a fitted state in which the first clamp member 14 and the second clamp member 15 catch and clamp the outer periphery of the cable 1 as shown in FIGS. 1C and 4B.

As shown in FIG. 5E, the first clamp member 14 and the second clamp member 15 have guide grooves 14h and 15h, respectively, at side surfaces. The first clamp member 14 and the second clamp member 15 are inserted such that the guide grooves 14h and 15h slide along slide projections 13e of the cover member 13.

The first clamp member 14 has a pair of fitting pieces 14b and 14e extending from a base portion 14a. The one fitting piece 14b is provided with an opening formed therein, and a stopper 14c is provided to a wall of the opening. The other fitting piece 14e has a tab-shaped stopper projection 14f.

The fitting piece 14b also has a projection 14d that climbs over a restriction projection 13f formed inside a main body 13a of the cover member 13 and prevents the first clamp member 14 from being pulled out of the cover member 13.

The second clamp member 15 has a pair of fitting pieces 15b and 15e extending from a base portion 15a, so as to correspond to the first clamp member 14. The one fitting piece 15b is provided with a stopper projection 15c. The other fitting piece 15e is provided with a stopper 15f to a side wall of an opening formed in the fitting piece 15e. The fitting piece 15e has a projection 15d that climbs over a restriction projection 13g formed in the cover member 13 and prevents the second clamp member 15 from being pulled out of the cover member 13.

With this configuration, the first clamp member 14 and the second clamp member 15 are attached to the cover member 13 in the pre-fitted state, as shown in FIG. 4A, in which the projection 14d of the first clamp member 14 and the pro-

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jection **15d** of the second clamp member **15** climb over the restriction projections **13f** and **13g** inside the cover member **13**, respectively.

In this state, as shown in FIG. 4A, larger space than the outside diameter of the cable **1** is formed inside, so that the cable **1** can be inserted therein from behind.

Pushing the base portion **14a** of the first clamp member **14** and the base portion **15a** of the second clamp member **15** in each other in a state that the cable **1** is inserted into the housing **11**, as shown in FIG. 4B, makes the stopper projection **14f** of the first clamp member **14** engage with the stopper **15f** of the second clamp member **15** and the stopper projection **15c** of the second clamp member **15** engage with the stopper **14c** of the first clamp member **14**, and therefore clamps the cable **1** from above and below.

Thereby, a clamp portion **14g** of the first clamp member **14** and a clamp portion **15g** of the second clamp member **15** catch and clamp the outer periphery of the cable **1**, so that the cable **1** is prevented from moving in a pullout direction.

In the connector according to one embodiment of the present invention, since the first and second clamp members **14** and **15** of the connector **10** are attached in the pre-fitted state, the connector **10** can be brought in a field in this state. In the field, the cable **1** having the terminal **1a** crimped at an end is inserted into the housing **11** from behind and engaged therein using the lance, and then clamped in this state by pushing the first and second clamp members **14** and **15** in each other.

Therefore, it is possible to facilitate cable connection in the field, and hence reduce man-hours needed for the connection.

REFERENCE SIGNS LIST

1 cable
10 connector

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11 housing
12 bushing
13 cover member
14 first clamp member
15 second clamp member

The invention claimed is:

1. A waterproof connector for cable connection, comprising:
 - a housing having a cylindrical portion for allowing a cable to which a terminal is connected to be attached thereto;
 - a waterproof bushing;
 - a cover member; and
 - a clamp member, wherein:
 - in a state that the cable is attached to the housing through the cylindrical portion, a front portion of the bushing is elastically attached to an outer periphery of the cylindrical portion, and a rear portion of the bushing is elastically attached to an outer periphery of the cable;
 - the cover member has an attachment portion for the clamp member;
 - the clamp member attached to the attachment portion clamps the cable;
 - the clamp member clamps the cable by fitting a first clamp member and a second clamp member to each other;
 - the first clamp member and the second clamp member constitute a two-step fitting structure having a pre-fitting portion and a fitting portion;
 - the first clamp member and the second clamp member are attached to the attachment portion of the cover member in a state of fitting the pre-fitting portion; and
 - after the cable is inserted into and attached to the housing, the first clamp member and the second clamp member are fitted to each other by the fitting portion to clamp the cable.

* * * * *